Centurion
UNIVERSITY
Shaping Lives...
Empowering Communities...

SDG 14: LIFE BELOW WATER

Overfishing - Community Outreach

95+	1,620 kg	80+	8 June
fishermen and fisherfolk engaged in field-based awareness programs	marine debris removed, incl. discarded fishing nets	fisherfolk at Chandrabhaga Beach	World Ocean Day 2025 observed

1. Overview

Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) carries out educational outreach with fishing communities to raise awareness of overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices. In 2025 this reached 95+ fishermen and fisherfolk through two coastal programmes: a field-based awareness programme with 15 local fishermen at a working fish landing centre in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, delivered by the School of Fisheries with 24 B.F.Sc. students; and a coastal clean-up and sustainable-fishing awareness programme with 80+ fisherfolk at Chandrabhaga Beach, Konark, held with the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), which removed discarded fishing nets and other marine debris. The School of Fisheries also continued its annual observance of World Ocean Day (8 June) with an awareness programme on ocean conservation and sustainable marine resource management.

2. Case Study 1: Fish Landing Centre Awareness Programme, Visakhapatnam

During an educational exposure tour to Visakhapatnam (Vizag), Andhra Pradesh, on 20–21 August 2025, the School of Fisheries, CUTM Paralakhemundi, conducted an awareness programme at a working fish landing centre. A group of 24 B.F.Sc. 5th-semester students, accompanied by faculty, delivered the programme.

At the beach and fish landing centre, the students and faculty engaged 15 local fishermen in discussions on **mesh-size regulations, appropriate fishing gear, fish handling practices, and illegal and unregulated fishing**. The interaction focused on promoting responsible fishing practices and reducing activities that contribute to overfishing and the depletion of marine fish stocks.

A beach and harbour cleaning drive was also conducted at the landing site to raise awareness about marine litter and abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear (ALDFG, or "ghost gear"), which continues to trap and harm aquatic organisms and damage marine ecosystems.

Table 1. Programme details

Item	Details
Dates	20–21 August 2025

Item	Details
Location	Fish landing centre and harbour, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
Community participants	15 local fishermen
University participants	24 B.F.Sc. 5th-semester students with accompanying faculty, School of Fisheries
Activities	Awareness discussions with fishermen; beach and harbour cleaning drive

Table 2. Awareness topics covered with fishermen and their link to the indicator

Topic discussed	Indicator area addressed
Mesh-size regulations	Overfishing: legal mesh sizes let juvenile fish escape and so protect breeding stocks
Appropriate fishing gear	Destructive fishing practices: choosing gear that limits bycatch and habitat damage
Illegal and unregulated fishing	Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing
Abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear (cleaning drive)	Destructive fishing practices: ghost gear that keeps catching fish and harming marine life



Figure 1. B.F.Sc. 5th-semester students and faculty at the fish landing harbour, Visakhapatnam, during the educational exposure tour and awareness programme (20–21 August 2025)

3. World Ocean Day 2025: Awareness Programme on Ocean Conservation and Sustainable Marine Resource Management

Continuing its annual observance of World Ocean Day, which in 2024 featured the Tableau exhibition "Saving Turtles – Sustainable Education for a Thriving Marine Future" on overfishing, bycatch reduction and Turtle Excluder Devices, the School of Fisheries observed World Ocean Day 2025 on 8 June 2025 at the Fish Resource Management (FRM) Laboratory, School of Fisheries, CUTM.

The programme promoted awareness about ocean conservation and the sustainable use of marine resources. It included a painting competition on ocean conservation themes, encouraging students to creatively express the importance of protecting marine ecosystems, and an awareness talk by a faculty member (Dr. Iffat Jahan) on ocean health, conservation and the responsible use of aquatic resources. A total of 44 Participants gained an

understanding of the importance of marine biodiversity conservation, sustainable fisheries and the protection of ocean ecosystems.



Figure 4. Painting competition on ocean conservation themes, World Ocean Day 2025, FRM Laboratory, School of Fisheries (8 June 2025)

4. Case Study 2: “Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar” Coastal Clean-Up and Sustainable Fishing Awareness with Fisherfolk — Konark and Astaranga

On International Coastal Cleanup Day, 20 September 2025, CUTM joined the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad, and the NGO SPANDAN to hold a beach clean-up and community awareness programme under the national “Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar” (Clean Ocean, Safe Ocean) campaign. The programme was coordinated by Dr. Kamal Kumar Barik (Department of Civil Engineering) and Dr. Pratap Kumar Chhotaray (Department of Chemistry), CUTM, with funding from INCOIS.

At Chandrabhaga Beach, Konark, more than 80 fisherfolk worked alongside INCOIS scientists, CUTM officials, students and local community members. Together they collected 1,400 kg of waste, including plastic litter, discarded fishing nets and other non-biodegradable material. INCOIS scientists Dr. Sanjiba Baliarsingh and Dr. Alakes Samanta interacted with the participants on the growing problem of marine plastic pollution and its adverse impact on fisheries and coastal livelihoods. At Tandahar Beach, Astaranga, more than 40 volunteers, including government officials, students and members of the fishing community, removed a further 220 kg of marine debris.

Awareness sessions held with the participants covered sustainable fishing practices, the harmful effects of single-use plastics, and community stewardship of the coast, and the programme closed with a collective pledge to promote eco-friendly practices and protect the ocean. All collected waste was segregated and handed over for safe disposal. CUTM Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr. Biswajit Mishra emphasised the importance of engaging youth and coastal communities in this work.



Figure 2. Coastal Clean-Up and Sustainable Fishing Awareness with Fisherfolk — Konark and Astaranga

Table 3. Programme details and results

Item	Details
Date	20 September 2025 (International Coastal Cleanup Day)
Locations	Chandrabhaga Beach, Konark; Tandahar Beach, Astaranga, Odisha
Partners	INCOIS, Hyderabad (Ministry of Earth Sciences); NGO SPANDAN
Community participants	80+ fisherfolk with local community members at Konark; 40+ volunteers including fishing-community members at Astaranga
Awareness topics	Sustainable fishing practices; harm from single-use plastics; community stewardship of the coast
Debris removed	1,400 kg at Konark (including discarded fishing nets) + 220 kg at Astaranga = 1,620 kg
Media coverage	12 outlets, including Kanak News and KNews (video), Orissa Diary, Odisha Khabar, The Businessbytes, Pragativadi, Samaja, Prameya, Samaya and Nitidina

Message to participants from INCOIS scientists

"Beaches are not only hubs of ecological significance but also crucial for tourism and the fishing economy. Collective action is essential to safeguard them."

Dr. Sanjiba Baliarsingh and Dr. Alakes Samanta, INCOIS



Figure 2. Fisherfolk, volunteers and the INCOIS–CUTM team with collected waste beside fishing boats and nets, Chandrabhaga Beach, Konark (20 September 2025; image as published by Orissa Diary)



Figure 3. Volunteers and women from the fishing community clearing the shoreline (20 September 2025; image from KNews video coverage)

Discarded fishing nets are a form of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear ("ghost gear") that continues to catch fish and harm marine life. Removing them with fisherfolk, alongside sessions on sustainable fishing practices, directly addresses the destructive-fishing element of this indicator.

Source: event report published on the CUTM website: https://cutm.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/event/2025/Beach%20Clean-Up%20at%20Konark%20and%20Astaranga%202025.pdf

Beach clean-up awareness programme, 2025

Sl. No.	Place	Date	No. of participants
1	Palasa Gopalpur Beach (Andhra Pradesh)	12 July 2025	12
2	Konark and Astaranga	20 September 2025	40
3	Berhampur Beach	23 October 2025	12
	Total		**64**